

Message Text

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ACTION SAB-01

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2171

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1293

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL CH

SUBJECT: ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION

1. ACTING CHIEF HOLDRIDGE CALLED ON HSIAO T'EH JULY 31 TO PASS FLOORPLAN SKETCHES OF NELSON GALLERY AND INQUIRE ABOUT POSSIBLE EXPANDED USE OF PRCLO FOR TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION AND CLEARANCE OF DETAILS CONCERNING ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION. HSIAO SAID HE WOULD PASS ON THE NELSON INFORMATION AND LET US KNOW IF ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WAS NEEDED.

2. ON QUESTION OF PRCLO ROLE, HSIAO SAID THAT FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS HERE WITH "SOMEONE" WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM PRCLO (PRESUMABLY HAN HSU), THE MFA HAD INSTRUCTED PRCLO TO MAKE CONTACT WITH BOTH THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND THE NELSON GALLERY TO LOOK OVER THEIR LAYOUTS AND DISCUSS SOME MINOR DETAILS OF THE EXHIBITION WITH THEM. HOWEVER, HSIAO MADE IT CLEAR THAT PRCLO'S ROLE WOULD BE STRICTLY LIMITED AND THAT ALL NEGOTIATIONS AND THE BULK OF THE DETAIL WOULD HAVE TO BE HANDLED IN PEKING. HSIAO EMPHASIZED THAT HE HIMSELF WAS MERELY ACTING AS A CONDUIT FOR THE "DEPARTMENT CONCERNED" AND HAD TO DEFER TO THEM FOR ALL DECISIONS.

2. SINCE HSIAO AT LAST MEETING HAD EXPRESSED HOPE THAT DOCUMENTATION ON EXHIBITION COULD BE COMPLETED BY END OF JULY, HOLDRIDGE BELIEVED IT DESIRABLE TO REFER TO
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THIS MATTER. WHEN INFORMED THAT WE WERE STUDYING LATEST

CHINESE PROPOSALS ON THE PROTOCOL AND EXCHANGE OF LETTERS, HSIAO SAID THAT THERE WERE ONLY FOUR MONTHS LEFT AND A DELAY MIGHT MAKE ARRANGEMENTS MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE U.S. SIDE, BUT HE DID NOT SEEM OVERLY CONCERNED THAT HIS JULY DEADLINE FOR ACHIEVING AGREEMENT HAD SLIPPED.

3. COMMENT: HSIAO IMPLIED THAT THE CHINESE HAD BEEN UNHAPPY WITH OTTAWA EXPERIENCE AND THAT PRCLO WAS GOING TO BE KEPT ON A VERY SHORT LEASH. THERE MAY BE SOME SCOPE FOR DISCUSSIONS ON PRACTICAL MATTERS BETWEEN THE MUSEUMS AND PRCLO (WITH DEPARTMENT MONITORING) AND ADVANCE VISITS TO BOTH MUSEUMS BY PRCLO PERSONNEL, BUT CHINESE INTENTION APPEARS TO BE THAT TRANSMISSION OF ANY MATERIAL TO THEM OR REQUEST FOR A CHINESE DECISION SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE HANDLED THROUGH THE USLO-MFA CHANNEL HERE. HOWEVER, FACT THAT CHINESE NOW INTEND TO SEND PRCLO REPRESENTATIVES TO BOTH MUSEUMS TO LOOK OVER ACTUAL CONDITIONS RATHER THAN LIMITING VISITS TO NATIONAL GALLERY SHOULD FACILITATE DECISION PROCESS ON THEIR SIDE.
HOLDRIDGE

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